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Governor's Message

TO THE

General Assembly

State of Connecticut

January Session

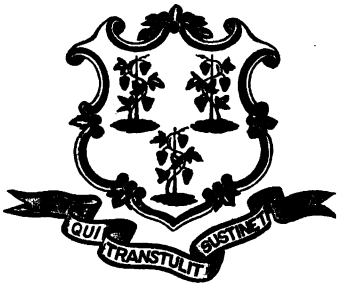
1905

MESSAGE

Of His Excellency

Henry Roberts

Governor of Connecticut



TO THE

General Assembly

JANUARY SESSION

1905

HARTFORD PRESS
THE CASE, LOCKWOOD & BRAINARD COMPANY
1904

SIGILLVM COLONIÆ CONNECTICENSIS
QVI TRANSTVLIT SVSTINET

Message.

Mr. President, and Members of the General Assembly:

For generations it has been considered an honor to have served as a member of the General Assembly, and as I note the character and ability of its present members, I feel that the high standard of the legislation of the past will be maintained. You have been elected by the people of the State to enact such laws as will, in your judgment, best serve their interests.

I assume that you will make no change in our fundamental law concerning representation in the General Assembly, as our increased Senate gives to our large centers of population a representation more in keeping with their great and varied interests; but I desire to call your attention to the injustice involved in the provision in the amended Constitution, upon which you will act, that provides that a majority of the electors voting cannot call a Constitutional Convention.

The work that is before you will principally consist in legislating for existing conditions, that have been brought about by our social and industrial progress.

In your deliberations the welfare of the State should be placed above every other consideration; and, when by any possibility there could arise conflict between public and private interests by reason of your action, private interests must give way to the public welfare.

It is not my purpose to take up in detail all of the departments of the State government, for their reports will receive the consideration of your several committees, but I wish to bring to your attention what I consider as the more important matters for your deliberation and action.

Finances.

RECEIPTS.

Quoting from the report of the Comptroller, I note that the receipts from all sources for the Civil List Funds during the year ending Sept. 30, 1904, were three million three hundred eighteen thousand eight hundred eighty-nine and nineteen one-hundredths dollars ($3,318,889.19), an increase over the receipts from ordinary sources of the previous year of one hundred two thousand seven hundred sixty-eight and ninety-five one-hundredths dollars ($102,768.95).

The receipts for the year ending in 1903 from "all sources" were $3,671,040.00, in which were included $454,000, amount received in settlement

of the Civil War claims, which largely accounts for the excess of receipts from "all sources" of the year 1903 over that of 1904—the receipts from war claims being an unusual and extraordinary addition to the yearly income of the Treasurer. During the year 1904 there were received $37,000.00 in payment of the Spanish War claims. It may be noted, in passing, that some reduction of the State income in 1904 was due to the fact that prices of securities taxed by the State were listed at lower figures than in 1903—the prices of said securities having fallen in value at the period of taxation below that of the preceding year; and the same was true of real estate values.

The funded debt of the State, less Civil List Funds in the Treasury, was at the close of the fiscal year $214,584.00.

Balance in Treasury.

The balance in the Treasury to the credit of the Civil List Funds Sept. 30, 1904, was seven hundred thirty-seven thousand five hundred fifteen and fifty-one one-hundredths dollars ($737,515.51), an increase over the balance of the year previous of one hundred nine thousand one hundred forty-one and seven one-hundredths dollars ($109,141.07).

Expenditures.

The expenditures during the past year were three million two hundred nine thousand seven hundred forty-eight and twelve one-hundredths dollars ($3,209,748.12), an apparent decrease of four hundred four thousand six hundred sixteen and three one-hundredths dollars ($404,616.03). But when it is remembered that five hundred eighty-six thousand dollars ($586,000.00) of State bonds were purchased in 1903, and only one hundred twenty-five thousand dollars ($125,000.00) in 1904, it is seen that there is actually an increase of fifty-six thousand three hundred eighty-three and ninety-seven one-hundredths dollars ($56,383.97) in ordinary expenses of the State over last year.

As before stated, the total expenditures were $3,209,748.00, including the purchase of $125,000 of bonds, leaving expenditures for all the other purposes $3,084,748.00. Of this amount there has been expended in permanent improvements for the different State departments as follows:

State Capitol and grounds, .		$19,325
State Normal Schools — new buildings at Danbury, .	$36,000	
State Normal Schools — new buildings, other schools,	15,700	
	$51,700	51,700

Humane institutions — new buildings:		
Conn. Hospital for the Insane,	18,500	
Norwich " " "	100,000	
New Haven Anti-Tuberculosis Hospital, . . .	25,000	
New Britain " Hospital, .	12,000	
Meriden " . .	11,100	
Middlesex County " . .	15,000	
	$181,600	181,600
Fitch's Home for Soldiers, .	9,500—	9,500
Total permanent improvements to State and other property, ...		$262,125

The above improvements are so much added to the State's assets in permanent form, and cannot be classed with the usual running expenses of the administration. It should be borne in mind that in the last five years the State's indebtedness has been reduced by the amount of two million one hundred eighty-eight thousand dollars ($2,188,000.00), while at the same time many worthy purposes and causes have been given needed support and help, and that any increase in expenditure in the last fiscal year has been for aid to common schools and other educational purposes, for the betterment of humanitarian and eleemosynary institutions, for judicial expenses, and for the relief of the disabled veterans of the Civil War. The State is by law bound to pay a

fixed sum for each child enumerated (and the number of children has largely increased), and she has a just desire to give to her poor and unfortunate people comforts and surroundings which a humanitarian view demands. There has been so much saving in several departments, notwithstanding the increased expenses, already referred to, that the actual increase in expense over that of 1903 has been only $50,000.00.

Few States, of our union of States, can offer a better financial showing than today appears on the books of the State Treasurer. The debt of the commonwealth is small, and this result has been attained without recourse to the burden of a direct State tax upon her people. The people of the State pride themselves on the honored and respected position she holds among her sister States, her credit unimpaired and all her obligations promptly and justly met. Nor withal is it, as it appears to me, the temper and purpose of the people to be niggardly in supplying just demands, but rather to appropriate with that fair and liberal spirit such sums as shall enable the State to preserve her prestige and maintain her reputation for progress and enterprise; and it was the overwhelming testimony of those disinterested but well informed, when last this matter of State expenses was investigated, that any curtailing on the lines proposed, as a result of that investigation, would be detrimental to the best interests of

the State. So that we may draw our conclusion that there has been little extravagance in State expenditures, and the increased outlay has been for legitimate purposes, and for needs which the people of the commonwealth will demand shall be supplied, especially when they relate to matters of education and the relief for the ills of humanity.

State Buildings.

ARMORY AND ARSENAL.

In 1901 the General Assembly provided that the Governor should appoint a commission, consisting of five persons, to investigate the advisability of erecting a new Armory, in the city of Hartford, for the First Regiment, Connecticut National Guard, and the said Armory to have connected therewith the State Arsenal.

Said commission was duly appointed, and submitted its report to the General Assembly of 1903. The report recommended that an Armory and Arsenal should be erected, and had secured an option on land fronting on Union Place, in the city of Hartford, for that purpose. The General Assembly of 1903 failed to act upon the recommendations of the commission, but it passed a resolution authorizing the Governor to appoint a new commission, consisting of five persons (three (3) of those appointed being members of the former commission),

whose duty it would be to report to this session of the General Assembly concerning the erection, site, and cost of an Armory and Arsenal.

There is an absolute necessity that an Armory and Arsenal should be erected by the State, to provide for existing conditions: the Arsenal, built nearly one hundred (100) years ago, is entirely inadequate for the proper care of the United States and State property, and the Armory used by the First Infantry is in a dilapidated condition and a discouragement to the National Guard, who are entitled to consideration at your hands. And in this connection I wish to call your attention to the language of the report of the commission of 1901 concerning the site for said Armory and Arsenal. I quote from that report:

"The site recommended is adjacent to the station of the N. Y., N. H. & H. R. R., fronting on Union Place, bounded on the north by Church Street, on the east by High Street, south by Allyn Street, and west by Union Place. The dimensions of the lot are 282.6 feet on High Street, 26 feet on Allyn Street, 288.1 feet on Union Place, and 308.6 feet on Chruch Street."

"In many respects the entire commission feel satisfied that the above location would be ideal for the purpose contemplated.

"The lot is sufficiently large to permit the erection of one building which would amply accommo-

date the State, for all the purposes to which an Armory and Arsenal might be put; it is adjacent to the railway station, and a spur track could be run from the main line of the railroad directly to the Arsenal,—in itself a matter of great importance both in the saving of expense and for the other reasons which will suggest themselves. A building erected on this site would be practically independent of other buildings, and in case of an Armory and Arsenal it is an advantage of great consideration. The proximity of the railroad station of itself, would be a great saving in expense over that incurred by the conditions existing today." The foregoing is an abstract of the report of the commission of 1901 — "*Protection for the vested interests of the State.*"

Permit me to suggest, for your careful consideration, a matter that I am convinced is of importance to the investment of the State in its Capitol buildings and grounds.

It has been apparent, to those who for years have known the conditions which have existed in the occupancy of the land located adjacent on the west of the Capitol building, of the impairment which has become noticeable to the Capitol building itself by the use of that land for manufacturing and railroad purposes. The Capitol building has been defaced by the smoke arising from these premises, the outlook thereon has been unsightly, and the condition of the same out of harmony with the well kept

Capitol grounds. To include this property as a part of the Capitol grounds, and to secure its use forever to the State, thus avoiding any undesirable use of it in the future, would seem to me most urgent, and to beautify it, or to erect thereon a building for state purposes, would seem to me commendable; and right here let me say that this property appears to have all the advantages recommended by the Armory Commission appointed by the Governor in 1901, to which reference has previously been made.

There seem to me to be no great obstacles to the adaptation of this property for the site for an Armory, and it will have the great advantages noted by the Commission of 1901, and the peculiar requisite of being adjacent to the Capitol building, which for the protection of the same, and for purposes of convenience, is one that should carry weight with it.

I am informed that this property, owned by the railroad company, on the west of the Capitol grounds can be secured at a reasonable price, or if necessary can be condemned for state purposes. I commend this matter to your careful and thoughtful consideration.

State Reformatory.

The General Assembly of 1903 authorized the appointment of a Reformatory Commission, whose duty it will be to report to the General Assembly on

the purchase of a site and the erection of a building for a Reformatory.

The report of this commission will be submitted to you for action thereon, with such recommendation as they shall present to you. Whether with the present law concerning "indeterminate sentences" the necessity for a Reformatory is as essential as before said law was passed, and whether the passing of this law relieves the conditions hoped to be alleviated, and whether in our State institution (so admirably managed by Warden Garvin and an efficient Board of Directors) such a classification of prisoners cannot be made as will so separate and segregate them as to accomplish one of the desirable purposes of a Reformatory, are questions about which there may be a difference of opinion; but no doubt the commission which has been appointed will in its report clearly set forth the needs, or otherwise, for building a Reformatory, in such a way as will help you to decide the matter. But to my mind, in view of the law now in force relating to "indeterminate sentences", it is a question which may be seriously considered as to the actual need of this institution at the present time, and the expense of erection and maintenance of the same will be no inconsiderable sum. With this suggestion I leave the matter to your determination.

State Library.

The General Assembly of 1903 authorized the appointment of a commission with power to purchase a site for a new State building, adjacent to the present Capitol grounds. The land designated, in the resolution creating this commission, is located immediately south of the Capitol grounds, on the corner of Capitol Avenue and Lafayette Street. The purpose of this resolution should, I believe, commend itself to your favorable consideration and action. The necessity of a fireproof structure, detached from and adjacent to the present Capitol building, will be apparent to you in your investigation of the needs of the State Library. That all the valuable volumes and treasures should be housed in a building which is absolutely secure and fire-proof will appeal to you, with the additional reasons that the present Capitol building does not afford either convenient room or the security for the safe preservation of those valuable records. In this building the Supreme Court chambers should be located, for the convenience of the court and members of the bar.

State Capitol Repairs.

To add to the safety of the present Capitol building it is necessary, as far as possible, to make it fireproof.

While the suggestion that I am about to make would not render it secure in this respect, it would

do very much toward that end. The upper portion or story of the Capitol building is so constructed that if at any time conflagration should occur, in that part of the structure, it would not only be difficult to check, but as a consequence much of the lower portion of the building would be damaged, with a result of loss and inconvenience.

To obviate this, it would be the part of wisdom to so remodel and reconstruct this portion of the building as will render it as nearly fireproof as possible.

I recommend that action looking to this end be taken by your honorable body at this session.

Decoration for Capitol Building.

I call to your especial attention the sketch model of the proposed scheme of decoration of the north front of the State Capitol, prepared by the well-known sculptor Paul W. Bartlett, now on exhibition in the north corridor of the Capitol building. The model of a statue of John Haynes, the first governor of the Colony of Connecticut, for which a contract has just been let by the Commission of Sculpture to Mr. Bartlett in collaboration with Mr. Richard E. Brooks, accompanies the sketch model. Mr. Brooks also aided Mr. Bartlett in preparing the latter.

I heartily approve the plans of the commission and its foresight in obtaining an entire and harmonious plan for completing one front at least of our

beautiful State building. The commission requires an appropriation to complete the north front in accordance with the plan, and I am in favor of, and recommend most earnestly, pushing forward the work, now that the State has secured the conspicuous talent and warm interest of one of her most famous sons, Mr. Bartlett, to supervise and take the responsibility of the execution of the scheme.

Salaries of State Officers.

Permit me to call your attention to the existing salaries of State Officers, and to point out to you what seems to be a matter which can well be investigated. It is well known that the salaries of the officers are very small in comparison with those of other States, and are hardly adequate for the labor performed and the responsibility assumed, and that in many instances subordinates to these officers are receiving greater compensation than the officers themselves.

A State of the importance of Connecticut should pay its official servants adequately, and should not expect that the honor of holding their respective offices should be the only desideratum connected therewith. As you know, no increase in these salaries will affect the present administration.

Creation of New Commissions.

The work of the several commissions of the State has been ably and capably directed, showing economy of management, and valuable service rendered. These commissions, it seems to me, are all that are required to carry on the business of the State, and it is generally conceded that this method of management and direction of State affairs is the most judicious way to carry on the same. Whether or not it would be advisable, in some instances, to consolidate the business of some of these commissions, tending to a matter of economy, is one that is worthy of thought and consideration. At any rate, I do not hesitate to affirm that there is at present no need of, nor should there be created, any additional commissions.

Taxation.

The law authorizing the State to tax her corporations has worked well in practice, and while it continues to do so it would seem that no change in this method would be advisable.

The law taxing inheritances should be amended so that the same estate should not be taxed twice within a prescribed period of time.

The policy of previous General Assemblies in exempting quasi public corporations from taxation is fundamentally wrong in principle, and should be discontinued. Every dollar's worth of property in the State, except that used for religious, college, or

school purposes, should bear its just proportion of the expense of carrying on the government.

Should you find, when an estimate can be obtained of the sums to be appropriated for various purposes at this session, and the demands on the Treasury are met, a sufficient balance remains in the Treasurer's hands, it will be well to consider a reduction in taxation at some point; and I think it will be generally agreed that the matter of a reduction of the tax rate on deposits in savings banks, and other interests of the poor and thrifty, should receive your first consideration.

National Guard.

The organized militia, by reason of National and State legislation now for the first time in existence, is what it ought to be, and what it was originally intended to be, "a body of citizen soldiers," not in name alone, but in reality, composed of men who are devoting their time and energy to the services of the State, without thought or hope of reward, other than which comes to all who do their duty in a patriotic manner; and the State is to be congratulated in having such a fine soldierly body of men ready at all times to answer to the call of duty in the enforcement of our laws. A body of soldiers ready to enforce the laws of the State is a guarantee that the laws will be obeyed, and every dollar spent in a proper and judicious manner on the Connecticut

National Guard, as it now exists, is a good investment for the State.

This is the policy now pursued by the National Government, who are spending large sums for the improvement of the militia, realizing that it is better to avoid war by being prepared for it than to live in a state of unpreparedness, which invites contempt of our laws and an infringement on the rights of our citizens.

Judiciary.

NOMINATION OF INFERIOR COURT JUDGES.

The manner of selecting the judges for the police, city, town, and borough courts is a matter that should receive the careful consideration of the Legislature. The harmful effects of the present method are only too apparent, and call for a change. The danger of harm begins with the selection of candidates for the Legislature, such selection often depending upon the respective attitudes of the several prospective candidates toward some local contest for a judgeship. Such considerations can only tend toward lowering the standard of the candidates nominated for the Legislature. Nor does the harmful influence cease with the nomination of candidates, but is often carried to the polls, causing division upon lines other than those of public policy, and in disregard of the public weal. Upon the meeting of the Legislature, the activity of aspirants for judicial

office, and their friends, often becomes a positive obstruction to the business of the session, such activity sometimes being of a nature not altogether in keeping with the highest ideals of the judiciary. Anything that in any way detracts from the independence of, or respect for, our judges should be obviated if possible. I recommend such legislation as will place upon the executive the responsibility of nominating all judges of the police, city, town, and borough courts as is now done in the case of the judges of the Superior Court, courts of common pleas, and district courts.

Compensation of Judges of the Supreme and Superior Courts.

It is generally admitted that the salaries paid to the judges of our higher courts are too small. In an effort to remedy this injustice the Legislature of 1903 passed an act which increased the salaries of the judges whose terms began thereafter, but not of judges theretofore appointed. As a result of this legislation, the youngest judge on the bench receives the largest amount, while the judge who has served the State for twenty years gets no increase at all. It has been supposed that this inequality was made necessary by the 24th Amendment of our Constitution, which prohibits the General Assembly from increasing the compensation of public officers, employees, agents, and servants during the term for which they

were appointed. This supposition may, however, be erroneous. In Pennsylvania a constitutional provision declared that "no law shall extend the term of any public officer, or increase or diminish his salary, or emoluments, after his election or appointment." Notwithstanding this, the Legislature passed an act in 1903 which increased the salaries of the judges of the Supreme Court of that State, and this act, I believe, has thus far been sustained as a valid exercise of legislative power. In view, therefore, of this precedent, and of what is conceded to be an injustice to the present judges of our higher courts, I have ventured to call your attention to this subject, to the end that it may be investigated, and the injustice corrected, if, upon such investigation, you are satisfied it can be accomplished without violating the Constitution.

Protective Legislation.

The written laws of the State, enacted at various times, for the accomplishment of some definite objects, not infrequently contain provisions which operate afterwards in a way not anticipated at the time of their passage, and serve purposes other than those originally contemplated.

It is not improbable that statutes intended at the time of their enactment to protect individual interests and to prevent harmful neglects, having effected their purpose, for the most part by their influence

and not by their enforcement, may be today more oppressive than protective, and the remedy which they provide more a means for individual advantage than the correction of a real evil.

The Legislature might very properly consider the existence of any such provisions among our general laws, and amend them in such a way that they will accomplish the real purpose for which they are intended, and make persons whose interests are affected the proper parties to evoke their protection.

State Board of Arbitration.

The issues between employers and employees are generally settled by amicable conferences, but when these fail, an impartial Arbitration Board, with sufficient power to fully investigate the difference, might be able to settle nearly all questions. The State Board of Mediation and Arbitration, authorized by a provision of our statutes, has not the power to call witnesses, and enforce their attendance, nor to thoroughly investigate differences that may arise. Sufficient additional power should be conferred upon this Board to call for the production of evidence from public service corporations, and this Board should have the power to act whenever either party to a difference between capital and labor, connected with said corporation, desire an investigation. I go no further in recommending this change than in its application to public service corporations. The report

of this Board, after such investigation, with its recommendations, should be transmitted to the Governor, and made public.

Welfare of Labor.

There will be presented for your consideration many bills, none of which you should consider more carefully than those relating to the welfare of the wage-earners of this State. Connecticut is a manufacturing State, having almost 190,000 working men and women employed in its various manufactories and industrial establishments, and legislation which concerns these men and women should have your most serious attention. The present efficiency of the Bureau of Labor and the office of the Inspector of Factories should be maintained, and whatever laws are necessary to increase the value of their services to the State should be passed. Legislation necessary to further protect and preserve the health and lives of the working people, to guard them against injury and accident, and to prevent the employment of women and children in dangerous occupations should be enacted; for whatever safeguards the health of the employees of our industrial establishments improves their efficiency and increases the prosperity of the State.

Louisiana Purchase Exposition.

Connecticut's representation at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition is well worthy of comment and praise, and this message would not be complete without a reference to it.

The Connecticut State Building was a model of its type in architecture, representing, as you are aware, the best Colonial style. In its interior adornments, it is generally conceded that no other building of those erected by the several States was so complete and attractive. Too much credit cannot be given to the commission which had this duty to perform, and I join in the praise which has been accorded them by the press of this country and the people of this State. The exhibits of Connecticut's products and industries compared favorably with those of other States, and afforded a valuable object lesson of the variety and value of the resources of the commonwealth. On the special occasions set apart, known as "Connecticut's Days," at the dedication of the building and, later on, the visit of his Excellency Governor Chamberlain (accompanied by his staff and the Governor's Guards), all connected with the ceremonies of these days acquitted themselves with great credit, received merited praise; and Connecticut's whole association with this Exposition is one that we all can take just pride in, and the results of appropriation made cannot but be in every way of great value to our people.

Humane Institutions.

During the year there have been erected and completed a Hospital for the Insane, at Norwich, and an Anti-Tuberculosis Hospital, near New Haven. Concerning the amount expended for each, reference has already been made. I find in all of the State Institutions that excellent results have been obtained, through modern and up-to-date methods, and they are rendering valuable and beneficent service.

State Colony for Epileptics.

The Connecticut Medical Society having adopted a resolution that a paper advocating a State Colony for Epileptics be presented to the Governor with the endorsement of the society, a committee from that organization was heard in advocacy of the project.

From a canvass of the State made in 1901 by a committee of the Connecticut Medical Society it was shown that there were at that time not less than 500 epileptics in the State, of whom at least 120 were neither insane nor feeble-minded, and therefore proper subjects for treatment. The medical profession of the State, as represented in the Connecticut Medical Society, the largest organization of medical men in the State, recognizes in the so-called colony plan the best method of treatment for this class of unfortunates, as being at once humane, curative, scientific, and economical, as shown in several institu-

tions of the kind in neighboring states in this country, and in several foreign countries. In the establishment of colonies of epileptics they are given proper education and training, and instructed in diverse trades and industries, and subjected to scientific methods of treatment by physicians especially trained and experienced in the management of this disease.

This matter is one that can be properly referred to the Committee on Humane Institutions for such action thereon as they may deem advisable, if the persons interested desire its consideration by this General Assembly and take the proper steps to this end.

Our Jail System.

There is one feature of our penal institutions to which your attention should be directed. I refer to the disparity between the amount paid by the State for boarding prisoners in jails and the earnings of those prisoners. The reports of the County Commissioners, for the year ending June 30, 1904, show that the State paid $109,971.00, while the receipts from the prisoners' earnings amounted to but $16,-874.00, or about fifteen per cent. of the State's contribution. This showing is not one in which the people of the State can take any satisfaction. I suppose at least ninety per cent. of the persons sent to jail are physically capable of earning their sup-

port. They should be furnished with something to do and then made to do it. Why should the State pay over one hundred thousand dollars a year to support persons who can just as well earn the money themselves? Even paupers are obliged to assist in their own support, when able. Why, then, should we apply a different rule to the inmates of jails? Ought not these places of detention be made less attractive because of stringent requirements of labor? "'Twere a consummation devoutly to be wished." I have briefly alluded to this subject, not in criticism of individuals, but of a system for the defects of which we are all in a measure responsible. Some action by the General Assembly is desirable, in my judgment.

Agriculture.

The agricultural interests of the State are in splendid condition, and land values are increasing in every section of the State.

The trolley roads are so connecting the suburban towns with the centres of population that the people from the cities are beginning to appreciate the advantages that lie in the ownership of farm property.

The good road movement has passed the experimental stage, and the smaller towns are availing themselves of State aid to develop their highways.

The Connecticut Agricultural College is doing creditable work, both in the theory and practice of

advanced agricultural science, and its graduates will have no small part in the future in forwarding our agricultural interests.

State Highways.

The rapid growth in population of our State, and the large commercial interests by water and by rail, has made this great question of transportation, whether by water, by railroad, or by road, an important matter for consideration. With the dawn of the new century old things are fast passing away, and a demand is made on the part of our people for many improvements over old conditions. In no field of State care, outside of our splendid school system, is the finger of reform pointed more emphatically or persistently than it is in the direction of highway improvement. So universally has the sentiment grown on the part of all our people, who use the highways of our State for business or pleasure, that it has now become the fixed policy of the State to improve our highways; and as an earnest of that fact, each Legislature has given an appropriation or the accomplishment of this purpose.

The Highway Commissioner's report to the Legislature will show that since the passage of the Good Roads law in 1895 there has been appropriated on the part of the State the sum of $1,538,910, and on the part of the towns the sum of $1,003,707,

making a total of $2,542,617. This has resulted in the improvement of many miles of our State highways. Inasmuch as the Commissioner's report has not been presented, and only an approximation can be had of the amount of work done in 1903–4, it is a difficult matter to state just the number of miles that have been or will be improved under the last appropriation. Approximately, the expenditure of the money will accomplish the improvement of 564 miles.

As the improvement has been chiefly on the 1,400 mile plan, upon which the Commissioner is now at work, it is safe to say that over one-third of the system has been completed.

The "old contract" and "working out tax" system are fast disappearing, and by force of the example set by the State the towns are of themselves improving their highways, under more permanent and economical methods of highway construction. While our State does not make as large an appropriation for highway improvements as some of our sister States, the money is being very wisely expended, and so long as this policy is pursued it is safe to say that State assistance will be continued. The new law very wisely provides for the care and maintenance of the roads by the town. This is the only safe policy for the State to pursue. If roads were to be neglected after they have been once improved they would very soon go back into their

original condition, and the last condition would be worse than the first.

The law regulating the speed of automobiles on our highways has proved a failure, largely because the penalty imposed for its violation is not severe enough to insure its observance. I recommend that the penalty for the violation of that law be increased so as to permit a jail sentence in aggravated cases. I am credibly informed that wealthy residents of other States, who use Connecticut merely to run over it, boast of the fines they have to pay, and count pursuit by the officers of the law a part of the fun of the transit of the State. Every automobile should be distinctly numbered. There should be no exception. The loopholes in the present law are taken advantage of to abuse and discredit it. The bicycle lantern law is dead and ridiculous. In my opinion, the public safety would be greatly advanced if the law required all wheeled vehicles out after dark to carry lighted lanterns.

Schools.

Free public education grows from year to year in extent, and consequently in expense. In proportion to the increased magnitude of the work undertaken and accomplished by the schools, the expense continues to rise. Twenty years ago the amount expended in the State for public schools was $1,791,804. The amount expended in the last year

was $3,588,276. Thus the expenditure increased more than twofold within the period mentioned, and now amounts to $3.95 per capita of the population.

These figures are proof that there is no slackening in the stream of liberality which runs to the public schools. They also show how ready the people are to uphold the system of free public education, and to make regular and large contributions for the support of the institutions which have been entrusted to their keeping. This great outlay of the people's money is indispensable to the welfare of the State.

Normal Schools.

To the end that all children may be taught by trained and worthy teachers, the State has established, at an expense of more than $400,000, and maintains, four normal schools. From these schools are annually graduated a body of trained and capable teachers.

Aid to Schools.

To meet the large expense which schools impose, towns and districts have in the past year raised by tax $2,741,181.96.

Although the support of the schools has never been accepted by the State, but has rested upon the towns, the State has long recognized the duty of aiding the towns.

School Fund. The earliest State aid extended to the schools was the income of the School Fund. This fund, created by legislative act in 1795, provided that all moneys derived from the sale of Western Reserve lands should be devoted to school purposes. The Constitution of 1818 safeguarded this fund, the income of which was "appropriated to the support and encouragement of the public or common schools throughout the State, and for the equal benefit of all the people thereof." This partial and continuous aid did not recognize special needs, but in part supported institutions which the State requires to be maintained. For many years it was distributed on the basis of an annual census of persons between the ages of 4 and 16 years of age.

State grant. In 1872 the income of the fund was supplemented by a direct State grant of $1.50, distributed in the same manner as the income fund. In 1893 the interest of the fund and a grant from the Treasury, the two altogether amounting to $2.25 for each enumerated scholar, has been distributed from the Treasury to the towns, to be used for teachers' wages only. In the year 1904 the towns received $479,281.50.

Evening school grant. In 1895 the State took a new departure and first extended direct aid for a special purpose, by a grant to evening schools, on

the basis of average attendance. During the last year the amount paid for evening schools was $4,692.

High school grant. In 1897 the report of the State Board of Education called attention to the inequality in the distribution of high school advantages. Many towns were unable to maintain high schools, and the children of these towns were practically deprived of a high school education. Under a free public school system some children could receive a high school education and others could not. The high school law of 1897 equalized high school privileges, by a grant to all towns in which no high school was maintained. In the past year the amount of this grant was $19,235.94.

All doubts of the wisdom of this legislation are set at rest by the number of those who have taken advantage of it. While in the year 1898 there were 136 boys and girls receiving a high school education in non-local schools, the number in the year 1904 was 813.

A question eminently worthy the consideration of the legislature is whether we can improve the high schools and make them worth more and reach more children. The new demands of technical efficiency have superseded the old ideas of a general education. It is evident that in the great industrial battle for supremacy, under the inevitable system of intensified production, the best possible technical training is needed. We can no longer rely on the common

schools and native ability. There should be opportunity to learn the theory and practice of particular employments. It is the immediate concern of the State to provide the schools, and our high schools may easily make the beginnings.

Average attendance grant. This grant is based upon average attendance and conditioned upon local tax for schools, of not less than four mills. Some towns have responded to this generous grant by endeavoring to secure good teachers and by conforming to the legal requirements relating to certificates of qualification. Under the provision of this law $35,209.05 were paid to 38 towns in the year 1904.

Supervision grant. The supervision act of 1903 was of the very highest importance and utility. Under this act the school officers of any town may appoint and pay a superintendent; supervision districts may be formed and the resources of two or more towns be united for the maintenance of a supervisory system; a special provision extends the benefits to smaller towns having ten teachers.

In the past year supervisors have been appointed for nine towns, at an expense to the State of $1,370.

Attendance and Child Labor.

The sums so generously granted by the State and towns fail of their purpose and are wasted unless the children are in school. The law of 1887 author-

izes the appointment of agents to enforce the laws relating to labor and attendance.

Free Public Libraries.

In order that those instructed in the public schools may continue their education, the State extends aid to free public libraries. The amount expended in the last year was $6,606.

The record of public libraries shows that they have made remarkable progress upon a solid basis. Every town must expend as much for itself as the State grants. The seventy-four town and city libraries of the State, established since 1893, are testimony that the busy activities of life have not limited the sympathies of the people, and have not narrowed them to personal and pecuniary interests.

School Fund.

The amount of the school fund at the end of the fiscal year was $2,023,723.23, an increase over the previous year of $1,548.90; the increase represents the net profits on the sale of real estate.

The income from the fund has been $107,172.56, and the amount transferred to the Civil List Fund for school purposes was $2,414.64 more than last year.

The report of the Commissioner will show the full details of the management of the fund for the past two years.

Trade Schools.

A commission was authorized by the General Assembly of 1903 to investigate the practical means and methods of industrial and technical education, and their report will be submitted for your consideration and action.

Conclusion.

In spite of a somewhat strenuous climate and soil, which away from the fertile valleys is proverbially unwilling, Connecticut is, nevertheless, even from a material point of view, as desirable a home as any State in the Union. Its agricultural interests are varied and abundant, and when the products of its fields are brought together, as was done at the St. Louis fair this year, her citizens as well as those of other states are amazed at the extent and the excellence of the exhibit. The trolley, telephone, the traveling library, the free mail delivery and other modern facilities are modifying and mollifying the conditions of rural life; a ready market for everything grown on the farm is presented by each manufacturing center, and the outlook for this essential and fundamental industry is decidedly cheerful. In our cities and mill towns the wheels are humming, the latent resources of our water powers are being developed, and work is plenty. Connecticut, proverbial for her thrift and intelligence, is in the forefront of the march of 20th century prosperity, and

our people are to be congratulated on the conditions as they are, albeit there is much room for improvement. It is for you to administer their affairs with wisdom and economy. A large revenue is no excuse for extravagance; but on the other hand it imposes a responsibility correspondingly large. The spread of intelligence, the protection of the weak and unfortunate, the reasonable development of our system of state highways, the maintenance of justice and the preservation of the public peace, in a word, the continuance to the people of Connecticut of the privileges and opportunities that life in this State affords, must receive your thoughtful consideration.

But reckless expenditure because the money is in sight will be condemned by those to whom the money belongs, and for whom we are the agents. Many gratuities frequently granted should not be permitted. The extinction of the State debt and the reduction of State taxes should be among the achievements of the next two years. It is not necessary, however, to add extensively to the already bulky volume of our statutes. Legislation is not the source, but the expression of government. We have laws enough, except as new conditions develop, and the Legislature is not to be taken as a cure-all for every ill or a substitute for the obligations that self-government imposes on the individual citizen.

Every citizen of Connecticut can feel a justifiable pride in the achievements of the past.